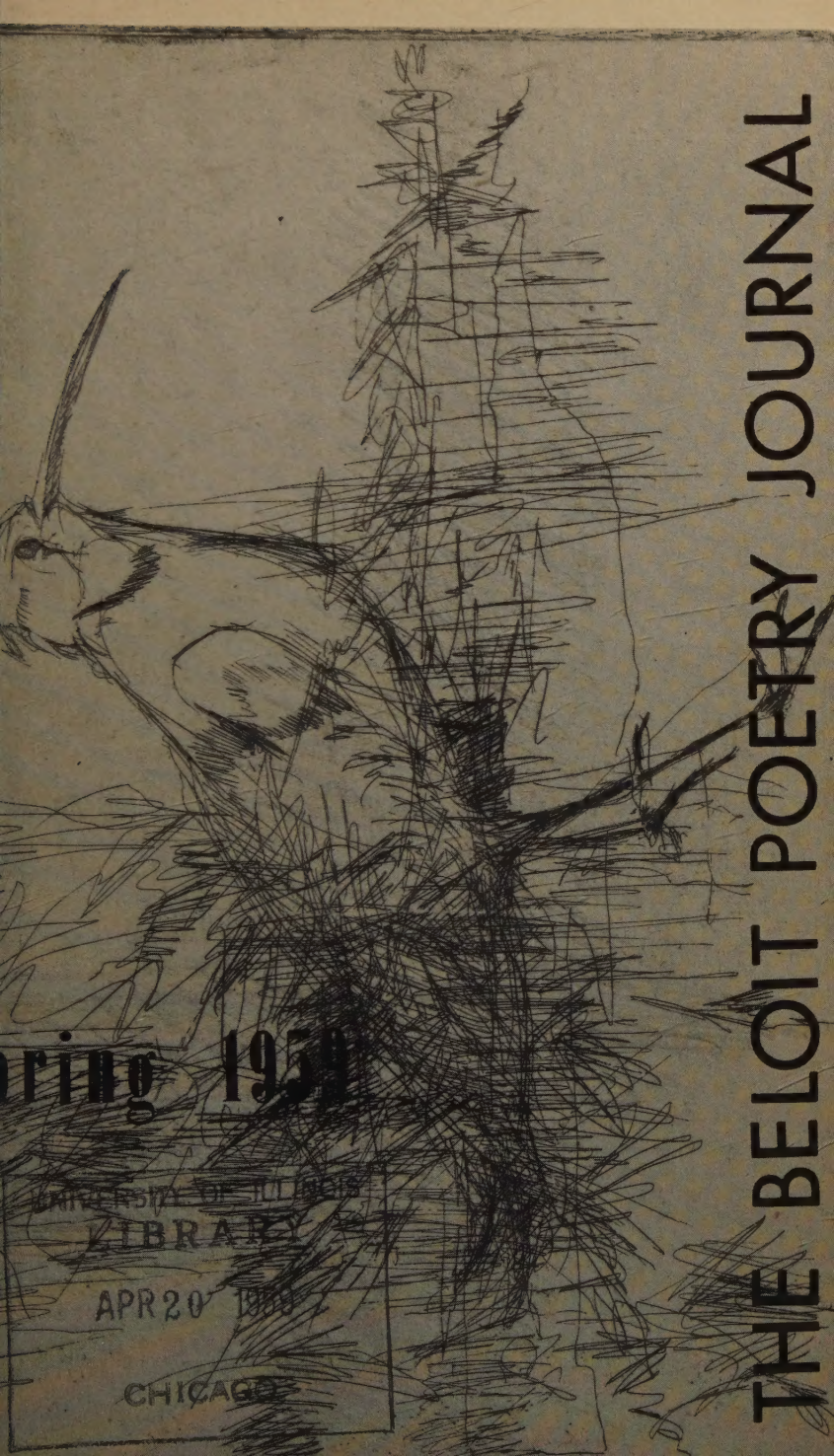




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THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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THE BELOIT POETRY JOURNAL

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TIGHTROPE WALKER

You scolded Frost for boasting he had sought
forgiveness of the Lord for little jokes
he played on God, and he'd forgive the Lord
His bigger joke on Robert.

Then you walked
across your tightrope, and I saw you fall.

My poor psychologist unsteady as
the feet that struggle; ready to condemn
the other who is you again:

shake off
the sawdust and retake your step. A ring
of us are watching. Though a ring won't mind,
a friend will. Find him on a single hand
and still count fingers left.

The plaudit is
my faintest effort to be brave and have
a faith in you, my young denial and
my blinded friend.

While you and God play blind-
man's buff on what restricted cable, I
regard your turn, less eager than my love.
There's nothing funny in this business of
a searching out, and God is not your prank-
ster though He puts *His* metaphysics in
the sport.

Go walk the fibre taut as truth
and pity all the bobbie frosts enroute
on thinner rope. Yours is the absolute.

Raymond Roseliep

TWO POEMS

SR Personal

BRYN MAWR GRADUATE, quiet, cultured,
(BA, English, thesis on Keats)
would like to rent small apartment
NYC, for year beginning
September. You'll hardly notice

her at all. Ravel, not Bach,
Schubert, not Beethoven.
(The heart in separate notes
of sweet emotion, take care
not to sound the fragile heart.)

BOX F-601. She'll have such
a tidy life. The sound
of living makes a crystal
fall, a cascade of jewels
exploding the level of whispers.

A rainbow fall of intimacy,
color, so much color tints
the ivory players, cocktails,
glasses like thin bubbles,
talk, quiet; Oh, the deaf heart!

Blue cheese on yellow Ritz,
yellow drinks in blue glasses,
a liqueur subtle as fire's edge;
light the cool palate, burn,
burn the Arctic throat.

A ruby bird's humming would
shatter the poised breast.
Yet here's a bird, too—

but, oh, the wings are clipped,
the cut wings have blown away—

how many years does it take
to blow away a bird's wings?
And why won't the bird sing?
Quiet, the music is to start.
The bird sleeps. The ivory

figures freeze in place.
God! They've put on
the wrong record! Eroica?
The heart - the heart's swelling—
the heart (BOX F-601) the heart's burst!

Walter Albert

The Jewel Thief

1. Let's say a spider took them.

See him at the light
Sketching a skein - pearl;
Fetching a fly - opal.

2. self-conscious, pearls
spread out, milk veins
make a bleary eye
to see morning by

honey, honey, honey
drones a dull bee;
what's a dry powder
pressed from an eye
weigh to a flower?

3. Titan's lost her way
in the heart of a pearl.

Let her cry ; she'll find the pupil.
It was Puck shut the pink lid.
He's still chuckling under the lash.
Call Oberon. Blow, blow the snail's horn :
It's a slow crawl to midnight and elves
but a horn travels fast if the sound's sweet.

4. Spider's had breakfast now.

His furry legs slipped
on the wet pearl -
it takes a jewel's tear
to trap a wily thief.

The web's all a-tremble.
A shower of pearls, opals, tears -
how they tumble
into the hungry cup
of a bee's lunch.

5. Who's the thief? Tongue.

What's the prize? Salt.

How's the queen? Dead.

Lay it to Puck.

He fell asleep on the eye.

That's one way to close it.

Walter Albert

TWO POEMS

Non-Definition No. 7

Go silence all the dogmatists, you sage
reluctance of MacLeish and Marianne
to specify the 'what' of (rather than
the 'shoulds' of) poetry. They did not cage
the thing in iron terms or try to gauge
it by a genius; no true poem can
be more defined than: 'happens when'—when man
goes walking, for example, to assuage
his grief; and, at a certain point along
the road, perceives that poem (or a part
of it) outhung before him in the sky:
"one quarter moon sunk like a haggard song
in someone's chimney"—this, like all his art,
transcends the categories we apply.

E. R. Cole

Hierarchy

Sidewalk:

fussy squares
of cement
leading
to

Grass:

full of
the lack of
daisies -
where

Ants:

erect
cities
of unconsciousness
under

Dogs:

slow-marching
auto-
mata
toward

Men:

who
go
fathering
poems.

E. R. Cole

THREE POEMS

Question

"... or what man is there of you, whom if
his son ask bread will he give him a stone?"

Matthew 7:9

But this man starved before he died
(For all Your word assures).
Could You not hear him when he cried?
Was he no child of Yours?

Where were You yesterday,
Among Your cherubim,
Turning Your cloudy face away,
Stretching no hand to him!

Sara Henderson Hay

The Inquisitor

How well God knows me, that He could
With so exact an art
Measure the weight of agony
To lay upon my heart.

How patient He withheld, until
It grew a muscle more,
Then added the precise degree
The heart could next endure.

Enough, no more; so kind was He,
So scrupulous with pain
That though I buckled at the knee
I hauled erect again.

Sara Henderson Hay

Souvenir

This heart-shaped bauble that I wear
May, in a certain light, appear
Pure gold, with honest gems inlaid.
Not so; the pretty trinket's made
Of gilt and colored glass and paste,
A careful copy, nothing more,
A skilful replica, a token
Of something that I had, and lost,
Or rather, something that was broken
Long, long ago, beyond repairing.
But, since I was so used to bearing
Its little weight upon my breast
I find this likeness comforting—
Though not, of course, a genuine heart,
A creditable counterpart,
A not entirely worthless thing.

Sara Henderson Hay

THE POETRY WORKSHOP

Seated, against the room, against the walls
 Legs extended, or under chairs
 Iambs, trochees & knees . . .
 We surrender, each of us, to the sheets
 At hand. The author swallows his voice. Still.

*Page two—page one is saved (and for the last).
 The poet has here been impressed
 By the relationship
 Between blue birds and black. In the octet
 We note the crow. And its iambic death.*

*On page three, "The Poet Upon His Wife,"
 (By his wife) we note the symbols
 For the poet—the bird
 In flight, the collapsing crow, the blue bird . . .
 (Note too the resemblance between sonnets.)*

We vote and stare at one another's crow.
 Ours is an age of light. Our crows
 Reflect the age—Ike-Dick-
 Colored stripes, rainbow-solids, blacks & whites.
 (Ruffling their wings, the crows refuse to vote.)

*Page four, "Apologies To William S."
 Apologies—the third sonnet.
 (And those who teach, who write—
 And teach—the man at hand, apologize
 For themselves, and themselves at hand; themselves.)*

The 'love' is *his*. The form, the words, the love.
 Epigraphs—footnotes—transitions.
 It is all a matter
 Of course, of one's course: "The Collapsing Crow."
 Chaucer—Shakespeare—Donne, Self . . . *Apologies.*

*Poets buy their socks at 'Brooks & Warren'
Like Du Pont—like Edsel—like Ike.*

—Anecdotes, whispers, cliques
Whispering—then aloud into prominence.
Brooks & Warren—Du Pont—Edsel & Ike.

Order is resumed. *We have been here, now
Forever. From the beginning
Of verse* (one has written
Nothing—and it is inconceivable
That one would, or will ever write again).

A class has ended: —they pass by, gazing
In. The poets gaze out, and grin.
They gaze out, and through the
Electric voice, the ruffled sonnet-sheets
That stare against the faces staring in.

Page one. Walled-in glances at the author;
And then the author disappears
(The poem anonymous).

Voice. Voices—there are voices about it:
Anonymous. The self. A sonnet's self. . .

The room is filled with it. It is a bird.
It sits beside us and extends
Its wings. Someone squirts it
With a fountain-pen. Blinded, it shrieks, dies
And sprawls upon the floor. We surrender

We surrender to its death—the poem breathes,
Becomes its author and departs.

We all depart. And watch
The green walls take our seats—apologies.
Brooks & Warren—Du Pont—Edsel & Ford.

Robert S. Sward

A SMALL BOY FISHING

A small boy packs his hook with ragged bacon
And sucks his finger for the grease. He's small,
But grown enough to know the biggest fish
Bite bacon. He wades in after fish
And cold explodes around his ankles like fire.
He knows the feel of little stones that stir
The inlets of the stream, but stalks his sulking fish,
Speckled in the rocks, and dark mosquitoes
Dance around his neck. His fingers clamp
The bend of sudden rod; he leans against
His silver enemy until he aches,
And now his dance is slow to tame his wildest
Dragon, speared to blood, until the scales
Lie luminous, like oil spots in the rain.
He slits his fish and spreads the silken belly
Like a purse laid open on gold entrails, and throws
The gut far in the stream.

His mother's fire
Has smoked away mosquitoes; his dragon steams
In state, its eyes still gloomy from the pond,
And blood rinsed from its slack gills. The flesh
Is soft as bread, and the spine lifts out,
A fern in brown fingers. The boy is eating
His whole day and drinking milk like wine.

Liane Ellison

TWO POEMS

**Emily Dickinson Speaks to the Reverend Charles
Wadsworth over the Wireless**

They thought that mileage drove a wedge
Through muted lanes of space,
Certain that departure's void
Would curve us into loss.

But they forgot the vibrant bridge—
A property of air—
The nervous waves that streak and bounce—
Our vaulting messenger.

Larry Rubin

The Hitchhiker

He stood, organic warmth beside the road,
A human fragment under asphalt skies,
Sculptured in levis, staking smile and thumb,
Invoking the oldest law among the Greeks
Before Thermopylae.

We sat, weighing possibilities,
Coolly placing prudence in the scale.
Riding that metallic virtue, lost
In vacillating memory of law,
We shot past smile and thumb.

We could not stop. Newton's First Law
Held us inert. Besides, our wisdom knew
What cold, post-Grecian metal is wont to lie
Beneath organic warmth.

Larry Rubin

TWO POEMS

A Place Beyond

Spelled by that dull maternal Nay
which said we couldn't and don't ask again,
we ran all gravel-footed round the day
from golden rising through the high green grain
down arch-grown labyrinths of humid lane
and crossed the bridge at Allen's; dropped like rocks
from its far end, and found the place like rain:
cool and blue beyond both sun and clocks.
Nor did we listen to that nether world
of nay and now, but went down brown as thrush,
berryballed and bare as frogs famished and swirled
in the nourishing pool; and when the widening hush
of evening pulled us out, we smiled to climb
the long green hill back into place and time.

Edsel Ford

A Various Harvest

They said my father could never farm this land.
They said no man before had had the touch
to turn those rocks and roots to profit.
My father smiled and didn't say too much,
admitting to himself a steady hand
and patience aplenty would be required
to do much with it. But he said nothing.
He set to grubbing sassafrass
and hauling rocks so he could keep a plow
in the ground. It was a challenge which inspired
him through the long days when orchard grass
fared better than corn. But somehow

CLARA d'ELLEBEUSE

After Francis Jammes

I love from old times Clara d' Ellebeuse
the scholar of a bygone convent-school;
she'd stroll, mild twilights, under linden-trees,
reading old novelettes in the fresh cool.

I love her only; on my soul there falls
the blue blue shadow of her snowy throat.
Where is she? And that joy the heart recalls?
Into her bright small room green branches float.

Perhaps she actually has not yet died?
or maybe it was *then* we both were dead?
through the great court there swirled crisped leaves
in the chill ends of summers long since fled.

Do you remember those tall peacock feathers
near rose sea-shells, grouped in a heavy vase;
—*on dit*, someone had sailed through maddened
weathers;

Newfoundland meant "the Banks"' great wave.

Come, come, oh darling Clara d' Ellebeuse,
come if you still exist, come let us love—
the ancient garden holds old tulips still—
come naked, Clara d' Ellebeuse.

Katharine Day Little



Placeholder



Placeholder

TWO POEMS

Lyric

I am after the gray wooden pegs of the sea;
after the plumb pre-roar
from the loose tongue of the waters;
I am after light vanity.

I am after the one-legged lizards of the sea;
after the crossbowed spider of the dusk
outmoded by lingers;
I am after light vanity.

I am after the heavy brogans of the sea;
after the gritty chills of the sand
trembling from shellshocked fumblers;
I am after light vanity.

Gil Orlovitz

The Impeccable Barbed Wire

The impeccable barbed wire blasting birds;
snarled, then, with bellowed warble,
the huddle of wings hogtied. But, trussed
to the terminals, how gorge these bleating
toggles to its own taut? Nicked to
the narrows, waspwrung, the wire wails
to rust, its own spare bloodpoisoning,
that across the arbitrary it be not charged
with next-of-kill, but the knack
of felling niche some sapped rots
away. We are clean out of powdered
red flakes, and cannot, for
the impersonal life of us, snap into song.

Gil Orlovitz

TWO TRANSLATIONS FROM THE CHINESE

The Newlywed's Cuisine

by Wang Chien

The third night after wedding
I get near the stove.

Rolling up my sleeves
I make a fancy broth.

Not knowing the taste
of my mother-in-law,

I try it first upon her
youngest girl.

Spring Song

by Li Po

A young lass
Plucks mulberry leaves by the river.

Her white hand
Reaches among the green.

Her flushed cheeks
Shine under the sun.

The hungry silkworms
Are waiting.

Oh, young horseman
Why do you tarry. Get going.

Translated by David Rafael Wang
in collaboration with William Carlos Williams

TWO POEMS

Getting Old

These are the things that really make
me ache, make me get up as now
at the core of night, nervous lest
I do not find a pencil quick enough:
this memory: the incredible joy
at age eleven watching my jackknifing
shadow plummeting in a sunny lake:
my brother and all the older boys
watching from the lower diving boards:
a bursting heart, an infinitely pleasurable
grin, uncontrolled joy in midair:
then that water-rushing-up look-down,
joy of going so deep from so high.

R. Mayes

Old Adolescent

I'm smarter than that fool,
stronger than he is,
could whirl words about that girl,
and charm her to a touch and kiss—
and sit here quietly still.

She is sweet, distant, made,
given my state, of candy and cake,
full of otherwise babble I could
center in a nice love affair—
I sit here quietly still.

My father is also strong and a
money-maker, loves me I suppose,
could meet these challenges,

according to his stories, with such ease!
I sit here quietly still.

Those two boobs boasting to her
are such boobs! Look at her
look sweet, look at them gesture,
their conversation is so inane!
I sit here quietly still.

She's older than me, though,
and speaks sophisticatedly,
it's time for me to go home,
finish this last beer,
I sit here quietly still.

R. Mayes

THE PORCH OF MY GRANDPARENTS

They built destruction in disguise: bleached gray,
Long-splintered, marked with ragged rain-drop
stains,
This porch that sags, and dips us when we walk,
Towards all the underneath grotesqueries:
Sick powder earth long years untouched by sun,
Black beetles, fortresses of spider webs.
And what we could not sweep away,
That slipped unnoticed underneath the broom,
Between the cracks: the dirty string, dead flies,
The vulgar yellowed paper. Cheap magazines
are here beneath this honest porch. Pathos
And obscenity remain of what we thought
Was truly tragic, truly Grecian.
But now the sloping boards recall for us
What really was and what remains, what is,
We cannot rip away with axe and hammer
But wait for cigarette or wind or rain.

Tom McAfee

CONVERSATION WITH ROBERT GRAVES, IN PASSING

Past the Ford plant, where cornstalks were,
Past a white lake and frozen swamp,
My Ford's distinguished passenger
Noticed the Ypsilanti dump—

"Where the fires always burn," he said,
"Jerusalem's Gehenna"—tires
And shoes and forms the living shed,
The long home of eternal fires.

The snow smoked on the dull cement,
The tires hissed like cremated dead,
Graves' eyes burned blue with merriment,
The white hair smoked on the stone head.

I told him Ypsilanti's name
Came from a Greek killed in the war
When Byron, in that uniform
He ordered made, settled his score

And went home in a keg of spirits,
Leaving his crippled heart inurned
At swampy Missolonghi, where its
Inexpedient fevers burned.

A mental wind had fired Graves' head,
The graven face crackled alive.

"How fast is this?" "Sixty," I said.
He grinned. "It feels like thirty-five."

Sheridan Baker

THE EMPIRE BUILDER - WEST**1. Slow**

the solid polished sound of its wheels
on the rail joints,
the Empire Builder slides succinctly
out of Union Station,
diesel exhaust twisting the pale early air,
scrubbed steel cars
undulating among the switches,
arched glass of the great domes
glistening green
in the haze-smeared sun.
Through the ranch-brick suburbs
block signals move green to red
like fingers snapping.
A morning pattern of newspapered commuters
turns one head as the Builder
flashes through Western Springs.

Illinois is a spring burning
over the husks of last year's corn,
lime dust from a spreader
leveling like windless smoke
above the black soil.

Illinois is a reverent row
of steepled pig-pens
in the pock-marked muck of the hog-run.
Illinois is a march of trees,
wide willows over
the slow silted streams,
a stand of beech
with branches like gray arms pointing,
neat oak groves
and a squirrel's nest rattling
among the new soft leaves,
four cedars in a pasture
with their bark rubbed off,
elms,
and a red-tailed hawk
fixed atop a sycamore snag.
Illinois is the round eyes of siloes
over the red barns,
over the thick strong fields.

North
swings the Builder at Savanna,
footing the river bluffs,
thrumming
past the duck-littered sloughs
and the muskrat lodges of the back eddies
and the red-winged blackbirds
riding the swinging reeds
in the trackside swamps.

2. Wisconsin is a march of rivers,
the Bad Axe,
the Trempeleau,
the Chippewa,
the Saint Croix,
green veins draining a greening land
into the immense-hearted Mississippi.

Wisconsin is the white-scarred loom
of the great bluffs
chalked with canoe birch
and stained with spruce
among the windy rocks.
Wisconsin is a sandy cove
near a bed of river lotus
with the tracks of a dog fox
printing the clean sand,
and the wavering wake of a muskrat
among the drowned alder
of a low green
island.

Wisconsin is fish nets drying
on the beach at Genoa
and a boatload of river mussels
with pearls and pink flesh
and static sunsets
within the muck-black shells.

The Builder runs whooping
through the Winnesheik bottoms,
splitting rafts of water-fowl
that rise in waves from its prow,
pounding past
the miracle of the lotus
and a thousand turtles
shell-shining in the westering sun.

3. Minnesota is a monument to grain futures,
fat-barrelled elevators bulging
by the Falls of Saint Anthony,
concrete cenotaphs,
their seamed faces scabbed with tar
against the fingering frost.
Minnesota is a march of lakes,
blue ponds

blooded now by the congealing sun.

The sky fades
like forged iron cooling,
and the low tree-furred hills
are slowly moving animals
in the elapsing light.
The Builder twists among them,
hooting the blind curves,
its swinging headlamp
flicking at the darkened trees.
Lights are off in the great dome,
but outside, arching over the curved glass,
the sharp green constellations
pulse
with quiet light.

4. North Dakota is the long night.
The Builder drifts
past the rooted potato sheds
in the Red River valley,
across the north-running water at Fargo,
and picks up
a steady heartbeat pace
crossing the interminable plains.
North Dakota is the somnambulant sway
and the little endless noises
through the rocketing night.
North Dakota is a march of stations,
paint-peeled sheds
with single light bulbs hanging harsh
in the wide treeless dark.

The Builder brakes
into Minot
with an odd cessation of running noise
and the new alert sound

of mail sacks slapping the creaking carts.
Then the diesels
thunder suddenly
and build again the sounds and sway
of the long dream-drowned night.

5. Montana is a march of hills,
the undulant prairie
humped
against the white and windy weight of seasons,
telegraph poles the only trees,
their cross-arms awkward branches
with sparse glass leaves.
Montana is a sod hut
blurring slowly back to the plain,
gray and dry as the cattle chips around it.
Montana is a distant herd of antelope
like crooked chalk-marks on the prairie,
and three horses
grazing the sun-small morning,
noses in the bitter grass,
mouthing the thin invading green.

Now the Builder
climbs
to the sudden spruces
frugally streaking the higher hills
up from the gray-green average of the land,
up to the drifts of dirty snow
rotting under the cut-banks
along the lower saddles.
The Builder shoulders the talus slopes
of the granulating mountains
and loops over the pass
below the lift
of the brittle blue-white peaks,
crooks through tunnels and wooden snow sheds,

and hisses into the idling
descent
from the height of land.

6. Idaho is an interval of evening,
a march of subsiding hills,
a gathering of rivers,
a look of clear green
in the low-angled light.
Idaho is a sudden crossing
into the brief and dreamless night.
7. Washington is a low gray morning,
mist pinching off
the tops of the heavy firs,
fields spongy and succulent and dark wet green.
Foetal leaves uncurl
on the grape vines,
cherry and pear blossoms
shake white
as the Builder whips
through the thickening air of the seaward slopes,
past the holly farms
and the flowered hills
to the gull-white air of the harbor
and the final sea.
- On the concrete apron of the train shed
the Empire Builder is
a singing silence,
and the smell of hot oiled metal cooling
slowly subsides,
and passengers scatter like spilled shot
over the salty morning
here at land's end
west.

Richard Curry Esler

GOD IS NOT AN ANALYST

“ . . . defend us in the same with
thy mighty Power. . . ”

Dissonances grow by the hour
and what began (by man) as a morning feast,
clashes the wet Northwest with the warm Southeast.

Do we make our humble confession to Him, devoutly
kneeling—

(for this the soul must answer, the conscience
vouch)—

or to him, as we lie ill at ease on the office couch,
projecting the past against the unfeeling ceiling?

We sit to learn, we kneel to pray, we stand to praise.
We only lie to sleep (perchance to dream)
or learn things dreamt are rarely what they seem. . .
Who brought us to the beginning of our days?

What first division marked our earliest ways?
Oh not till heat draw heat and so collide—
only from union can we then divide:

From Brother North and yielding Sister South
pressed knee on knee and open mouth on mouth.
So kneeling both to pray and to confess
succeeds the mighty sin and synthesis.

Herman Salinger

CONSTANT G FOR GALILEO

At first he thought it was the bells, two mooning bells marked alpha and omega but counterpointless swung like either/or, in a puzzle of odd and endless sound, like ultimatums. It was his pronounced opinion that the bells annoyed him; and it warmed his heart, Galileo Galilei, to watch the patient drizzle of nits unmoved between the bells, their feet asleep.

At first he thought it was the bells and made a face: "The nits no longer budge; should I?" Besides it seemed, dependent on each upturned iron grail, there hung a claque, monotonous succession of the same disciple, clapping with its tongue the stoic bell-mouth, speaking in parabolae. Still he wished he were the cocksure sun, crowing on arcades.

Today he would explain within the palace yards yesterday's experiment at this (selfsame?) tower (leaning in an unseen breeze) adjacent to the campanile

(one rang dawn, dim dawn; the other kingdom come, come kingdom, come: reminders; why bells across from how tower; sounding timeless as far as sound went, as far as any sound.)

There had gathered galleries of townsmen for a funeral

procession; many even rubbed their shoulders off on him,

the while he thought of church and what the clappers called

eternity. At first he thought it was the bells that made him shake, but then the tower leaned and he remembered why he'd come, remembered corpses

he had carved at school: the minute we relax—the maggots!

Leaving G sub-one below with ready hourglass
(for who else could be trusted? even he. . .),
G sub-two ascended with his missiles to the tower.
(Bells of impending scorn, thongs of high time.)
“Have I exhausted possibility? Can it be
that what for yesterday was true, is not today?
Things probable as I predict them must be proved—
this once.”

He stopped to rest, beneath the blazing chandeliers
of mortal glass that tried at length to fingerpoint
the center of the earth. The motion made him wonder,
“What’s momentum but a longing wish to fall to
earth,
to fly to center? Even our brief pendulum will stop at
still point;
open, hourglass: I fall! my banner is a flagstone.”

He struggled out upon the parapet. “Perhaps,”
he muttered, putting forth a sunswept hand. Slowly,
slow
his long foreshadow ruled, eclipsed the bells, and he
renewed.

“Claptrap bells of always, thinking they can stop
process!

Arrest change? As easily stop the downward plummet
of these balls when once they drop. Let there be
change:

I only ask to make a better yardstick.

—Then let it stop,” a bell within him added, crabbing,
when the cramping of his own resounding claque
came through. He heard himself ring now/then with
them,
with them now/then, double-tongued babel bells,

worrying each other. "Then let changing stop,
so I may be an idol in the marketplace.

By any means, let me be me tomorrow: constant
Galileo.

"Corollary: things contingent and unforeseen,
protect our facts from being as precarious as Pisa.

If only g is constant; oh, be constant, g ."

("Some questions," father said, "we do not ask
but just assume we know, assuming our assumption
true

without a q.e.d. Keep your head at home, my son.")

"Justify my faith in reason; oh, be constant, g ."

Galileo's long view looked out, from so high
he could see, as through a private scope,
gondoliers and night, coppersmiths with daggers,
stone jugs of liaison, a dusk of pedestals
and grottoes, tonsured pikemen and the *sburri*.
"*Testes vos estis . . .*" Feeling by that very feeling
lifted suddenly, ecstatic with acceleration though
ungravitated:

facsimile of the Galilean out of the whirlwind
who walked like bread on water, consecrated,
walked on the sea of himself: highly levitated,
clearly an untenable position—Galileo prostrated
himself,

approximately, blinked fast as if sunblind.

(Clack clack like clatter of swordflats: bells
incentric: not eternity but tomorrow to be baffled.)

Sub-one looked up and waved a friendly, urgent hand;
sub-two ("Be constant, g ") released the heavy balls,
knowing at once it would be necessary now
to do this everyday, while identity persisted,
to be sure, to be sure; and not surprised
when one ball crushed the hourglass so sand ran out,

and one ball crushed sub-one, assurance and all.

There came a raffle of voices from the street:
a corpse had been mislaid; the funeral paused
while people scratched at one another's heads.
Then gratefully they took sub-one and walked away,
as rearranged sub-two tried not to see;
walked far; far; until he couldn't have found himself,
dared he venture through his longest telescope.

Leonard Casper

PETITE CHANSON

Laughtered in burning the bugled negation
swelling to thunder the spavined alarm
swept to disaster in the hypnotic cataclysm

The heroes seek the silver of birth
singing the little, the little lifted upward
catching the singular rays of rebellion

The stallion yet standing ribboned and royal
casting betrayal to the stars dim as mercy
the passionate caution is burned to bitter fear

Sandwiched as healing between gallantry and gain
the grain of doubting is a bountiful harvest
shocked in windrows mighty as winding

Curtained to secret the faultless are white
the blame riding rough through limitless stars
the tongues of the killers are blind as their stares

Judson Crews

RESURRECTION

Doctor? Well, yes: you must have heard that from my nephew.

It's true. It was at least. It wasn't medicine.

Why don't we have a little drink after the conference if you have time? Back here, beside the elevator.

You're like my nephew. Both of you escaped the war, you both rushed into business straight from school, and now

you're quick to be impressed by me, a scientist.

To you, who run to life, there's glory there, and there is glory there that I can't tell. You've never heard of Grubler. You were born when he left Germany at just my age: "The old life had been buried," he said,

"by upstart men. I came where that life had never been."

Well he's an oldster now, perhaps retired by now, a great zoologist. I followed him out West, as an associate, in summer '41.

That expedition yielded me my doctorate.

I might as well recount that summer. There were two female assistants and another candidate, a friend of mine who fell in Germany: so while the women read we worked. The first week we set up the women's hut and our shack and the laboratory where Grubler lived. The second week we did exploring:

mud flat, lower ridge, high ridge, hard rock outcropping,

crumbly rock, mud flat. Grubler hammered flags around.

For a week we dug and sifted by S. O. P.,

preserving fossil specimens and labelling them.
Then Grubler split a rock, and a pearly toad limped
out,
alive, and cringed against the light (as we soon all
did.)

"We'll call him Anastasios," said Grubler. I saw
him change: his beard untrimmed, the crew-cut
overgrown.

He crawls from site to site for days. With stethoscope
and a rubber mallet he auscultates the stone.

His labors paid: he soon uncovered Anastasia.
He kept the toads in one terrarium, forcep-fed
them agar-fattened grubs, increased the temperature
at intervals, and watched and cooed. When, in his
walks,

he'd find a couple of the staff in one or other
of four combinations, he watched and cooed the same
"Be happy, children." Strangely, nothing germinal
survived our idle weeks, from field or laboratory.

No: who could expect it from that laboratory?
After a hundred-odd thousand quiet winters?
There was no negligence. "Let us collate our data,"
Grubler said. He laid the two toads in alcohol.

He spoke in the lazy tone he used when, next year,
we came in uniforms and doctoral robes to say
goodbye: "This was a false arising of my land.
It should be hidden, children, kill them." On the day
we left our camp, a real prospector appeared,
like Grubler's twin in checkered shirt and frayed
Levi's.

You strike? "I hunted animals in barren country."
Gold grows where nothing else grows. "Then the
camp is yours."

After the war I went into investments. Thank you:

I never married. Labor, failure, pleasure, danger
even, turn curious or charming in memory,
and only love is bleak. Thank you: business is lively.

Richard Emil Braun

TWO POEMS

Light and Dark

As though I were a little swallowing
Of Scotch conniving inward to myself,
I go to sleep and feel the liquor sting
The turning center of my compassed self.
I am quiet, there, as a genie in a bottle.

In my selfskin bottle I conjure the sort
Of world a kite discovers when the string
Is broken: a bit of terror and of sport:
And I conjure the sort of world a string
Discovers when the kite is liberated.

My senses unite in my brain and fuse
An imitation world about the size
Of a thrush; to cover him up I use
A hat or else he'd openly surprise
Sun's citizens. At night I never wear a hat.

The day and I slowly focus upon
The bed until I am distinctly there,
Though my eyelids blink. Blinking, I look in
And out to see what dark and light may share:
The dial's shadow is dreaming in the sun.

Andrew Oerke

Little Elegy

The crowd is busy with its bundles and its shoes.
The sun parades the street, whose speckled stars
Of mica twinkle in the frozen, baked cement.
In the minor wind a few loose papers scutter by
And lodge against the curb where now my eyes are
bent.

A bit of fuzz, or rag, bedraggled, nestles there;
A wad of crumpled feathers with a sparrow's face.
I look up at the sky: there are no birds in sight.
Could he have tumbled from the eaves of this high
roof,
Or did he suddenly fall dizzy out of flight?

It must have been today he spiralled out of air
Onto the hard cement, against the gutter's bank,
Where he lies queerly sprawled, as though he would
abash
His strange surroundings. —Last night the gentle
cleaners
Would have swept him into seas of trash.

But he is here, touching the afternoon's repose.
'Dead as a door nail,' is what the children say of him.
At least tonight he'll have a makeshift burial;
And all-day-long, today, he'll stare at passers-by,
A few of whom may mourn for him, our common
Ariel.

Andrew Oerke

AUNTIE GLICK

Auntie Glick crocheted all through the hurricane.
She sat among the rubber plants, her pomander
scent warring with their soapy one, and never
once left off a lacy antimacassar
until the thread built up a perfect sun.

During the storm that bowled the boardwalk over
and chewed it down to matchsticks, which had never
happened before, and the biggest waves at Ventnor
licked inland up to three blocks, Auntie Glick
poked under over with her needle hook

until the sea swam back to where the border
of the shore could take a hold again. Order
reigned on all the chairs; all arms were prisoners
of the frothy circlets made by Auntie Glick
who feared no storm and kissed me on the cheek

more bite than kiss, and spoke wild words I took for
threats; her love in Polish, I learned after
I was grown. Under the feather comforter,
they found the dead hands still held hook and skein.
Her blind eyes open, each made a perfect sun.

Maxine W. Kumin

TWO POEMS

On the Anniversary of My Dying—IV

Now I am ready—all the rest is fact
And far behind. They say when Thomas died,
He called the *Summa* "sawdust": having packed
It full of wise and Aristotle, spied
That secret holy wonder of the light
And knew his wisdom (even his!) became
A shadow in the radiance. The sight
Of such a glory and compelling flame
So moved Pascal to line the coat he wore
With that one word which caught the essence of
His vision: "fire"—so I will nothing more
Within this cave which images such Love:

I want the sun itself. Come Christ, you brave
And bawdy lover of my bowels. Come save.

William Packard

Either Like Abraham

either like abraham we love enough
to put a living love beneath the knife;
or lost in love of make-believe and bluff
we celebrate the littleness of life.
secretly samson grows his strength again
to pillar down the secret-thieves above:
either we live our loves beyond the men
that meddle us, or lose our sight of love.
either a haircloth in the wilderness
of hope, the voice of him that crieth out;
or headless prophets of our hopelessness,
the voiceless, frightened acolytes of doubt.
either the god in us is made to weep,
or we console ourselves, and suffer sleep.

William Packard

TWO POEMS

Fantasia

My parents went down to the river to drink.

And why go there when they had taps
Full of great crystal staves to drive in their mouths
When the river is slow and green and thick as soup
And motes dance in it that meet and breed?

One might have been a murderer
And the other the natural murder-ee
Persuaded to drink from a cold natural syrup
Was manly and good for the bowels.
Then as her body sank
The other might be persuaded to think
That what he wiped from his brows was blood . . .
no, I cannot say

That two went down and one came back
For I saw them return talking quietly,
(One of a series to lull suspicion?)
And I cannot ask them twelve years ago
If they went down to the river to drink
For hatred of cisterns and constant questioners;
Or apologise for mishearing them speaking so low,
Going down to the river to talk and think,
About me.

Peter Redgrove

Without Eyes

Today, to begin with, she will do without eyes.

Staring at the speckled ruby eyelids make of the
sunny window

Now she tries the world with her eyelids closed;

Pulls the length of her body out of the rasp of sheets
Into her self-made nighttime; delicately shuffles her
 way along the hairy carpet
To the cool rim she traces round with a finger.
Heaves the heavy bulging of the water-jug, tilts
And lets it grow lighter,
The tinkling in the bowl wax to a deep water-sound.
Sluices her bunched face with close hands, finds
 natural grease,
With clinking nails scrabbles for the body of the
 sprawling soap,
Rubs up the fine jumping lather that grips like a
 mask, floods it off,
Solving the dingy tallow.
Bloods and plumps her cheeks in the springy towel,
 a rolling variable darkness
Dimpling the feminine fat-pockets under the deep
 coombs of bone
And the firm sheathed jellies above that make silent
 lightning in their bulbs.

Moves to her clothes—a carpet-edge snatches her toe
Plucking the tacks sharply like flower-stalks from
 the boards but
Leaves her smirking in darkness. Dresses:
Cupped hands grip. The bridge chafes quickly over
 the thighs
And closes on the saddled groin,
Her silk dress thunders over her head and on to the
 flounced opening
Into quiet

And her eyes clip open on the ardent oblivion of her
 resolution and
The streets and clouds from her high window, swim-
 ming and dazzled, rush in.

Peter Redgrove

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CONTENTS

1	RAYMOND ROSELIEP	<i>Tightrope Walker</i>
2	WALTER ALBERT	<i>Two Poems</i>
5	E. R. COLE	<i>Two Poems</i>
6	SARA HENDERSON HAY	<i>Three Poems</i>
8	ROBERT S. SWARD	<i>The Poetry Workshop</i>
10	LIANE ELLISON	<i>A Small Boy Fishing</i>
11	LARRY RUBIN	<i>Two Poems</i>
12	EDSEL FORD	<i>Two Poems</i>
13	JUDSON JEROME	<i>Two Poems</i>
15	KATHARINE DAY LITTLE	<i>Clara d'Ellebeuse</i>
16	GIL ORLOVITZ	<i>Two Poems</i>
17	DAVID RAFAEL WANG	<i>Two Translations</i>
18	R. MAYES	<i>Two Poems</i>
19	TOM MCAFEE	<i>The Porch of My Grand- parents</i>
20	SHERIDAN BAKER	<i>Conversation with Robert Graves</i>
21	RICHARD CURRY ESLER	<i>The Empire Builder</i>
27	HERMAN SALINGER	<i>God Is Not an Analyst</i>
28	LEONARD CASPER	<i>Constant G for Galileo</i>
31	JUDSON CREWS	<i>Petite Chanson</i>
32	RICHARD EMIL BRAUN	<i>Resurrection</i>
34	ANDREW OERKE	<i>Two Poems</i>
36	MAXINE W. KUMIN	<i>Auntie Glick</i>
37	WILLIAM PACKARD	<i>Two Poems</i>
38	PETER REDGROVE	<i>Two Poems</i>

